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Message Text

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15
ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3420
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC

UNCLAS CANBERRA 3728

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AS, PGOV
SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENTS NEW AUSTRALIAN GOVT.

REF: STATE 126993

TOKYO FOR SNEIDER

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. SUMMARY: EDITORIALS HAVE SHOWN NO CONCERN OVER CAIRNS APPOINTMENT IN TERMS OF US/AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS OR THE JOINT FACILITIES. ONLY PIECE BY BRIAN TOUHEY IN FIN REVIEW TOUCHED ON THE PROBLEM OF SECURITY CLEARANCE. IN GENERAL PAPERS SEE CAUCUS VICTORY AS A WARNING TO PM AND EDITS WARN CAIRNS AGAINST APEAKING OUT AS IN THE PAST.

2. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE ELEVATION OF CAIRNS PAPERS HAVE ALL COMMITTED THAT CABINET (LESS GRASSBY) IS ALMOST THE SAME AS IT WAS PRIOR TO ELECTION BUT WITH SOME CHANGES IN ALLOCATION OF DUTIES. TYPICAL IS EDIT IN AGE TITLED QUOTE SAME HORSES FOR OLD COURSES UNQUOTE AND AUSTRALIAN LAMENTS THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE NEW FACE, SEN WHEELDON, HAS APP-EARED IN THE 27 MAN CABINET. ALL PAPERS SAY THAT CAIRNS
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DEFEAT OF BARNARD IS A CAUTION TO THE

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PM. AGE EDIT NOTES QUOTE MR. WHITLAM'S HEGEMONY HAS BEEN
DRECREASE SIMPLY BECAUSE IN THE EVENT OF A CONFRONTATION
BETWEEN CAUCUS AND PM, THE DEPUTY LEADER WILL STAND
OUT AS A REAL ALTERNATIVE UNQUOTE.

3. CAIRNS VICTORY IN CAUCUS GOT WIDE ATTENTION IN NEWS,
EDITS AND PIX SHOWING SMILING PM AND NEW DEPUTY SHAKING
HANDS. HEADLINES ALL SAID CAIRNS ASKS MORE POWER. EDITS
ON CAIRNS VICTORY AND MURPHY AGAIN LEADING SENATE SEEN AS
A SWING TO THE LEFT AND A DEFEAT FOR PM IN CAUCUS. THE
EFFECT OF CAIRNS' NEW POSITION ON FOREIGN RELATIONS HAS
HARDLY BEEN MENTIONED AND THEN ONLY IN AN HISTORICAL CONTEXT
OR AS A CAUTION AGAINST SPEAKING OUT OF TURN. ON THE SPECIFIC
FACT OF AUSTRALIAN/AMERICAN RELATIONS NO COMMENT WAS MADE.

4. CANBERRA TIMES EDIT TITLED LABORS NEW LINEUP PRAISES
BARNARD FOR HIS LOYALITY BUT SAYS QUOTE A DEPUTY WHO CRITICISES,
CHANNELS DIFFERING VIEWS, AND GENERALY ACTS AS A DEVIL'S
ADVOCATE HAS MUCH TO COMMEND HIM IN THE INTEREST OF TOTAL
EFFECIENCY UNQUOTE. CT WHICH PRIOR TO CAUCUS VOTE HAD EX-
PRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT CAIRNS FOR SPEAKING OUTSIDE HIS
PORTFOLIO SAYS NEW DEPUTY MUST REALIZE QUOTE IN THE ABSENCE
OF THE PM HIS DEPUTY HAS NO REIN ON THE SCOPE OR BREADTH
OF HIS COMMENT: IT IS ALL IN THE NAME OF THE GOVERNMENT UNQUOTE.
AUSTRALIAN EDIT SAYS CAIRNS HAS WON RESPECT OF THE BUSINESS
COMMUNITY WHICH NORMALLY WOULD NOT TAKE SO READILY THE FIRE
BREATHING SOCIALIST THAT HE IS OFTEN PORTRAYED. PAPER FEELS
CAIRNS WILL BE A BRIDGE BETWEEN PM AND CAUCUS BY INJECTING
CAUTION IN PM'S COUNCILS AND SO AVOID THE DISPUTES BETWEEN
PM AND PARLIAMENTARY PARTY WHICH HAVE SO MARKED THE FIRST
WHITLAM GOVERNMENT. AUSTRALIAN ALSO CAUTIONS CAIRNS THAT
HE WILL NOT HAVE THE LIBERTY TO SPEAK OUT AS HE HAD AS A
BACKBENCHER OR EVEN TOOK AS A MINISTER AND SAYS QUITE WITH THE
INCREASE IN POWER AND STATUS HE HAS BEEN GIVEN, HE MUST
ACCEPT THE GREAT INCREASE IN RESPONSIBILITY THAT GOES WITH
IT UNQUOTE.

5. BULLETIN HAS COVER STORY ON CAIRNS QUOTE LABOR'S LAST
BANNER CARRIER UNQUOTE. STORY IS LARGELY HISTORICAL WITH NO
COMMENT. CITES CAIRNS' PARTICIPATION IN VN MOROTIRIUMS
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AND EARLY LIFE AS A POLICEMAN. COMMUNIST PARTY ONCE CONSIDERED
ASKING HIM TO JOIN BUT THIS WAS VETOED AS THEY FEARED HE MIGHT BE A
POLICE SPY.
GREEN

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